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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/033,644	12/27/2001	Katrina Mikhaylichenko	LAM2P316	7982

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, KHIEM D

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2823

DATE MAILED: 01/16/2003

7

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/033,644

Applicant(s)

MIKHAYLICHENKO ET AL.

Examiner

Khiem D Nguyen

Art Unit

2823

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 27 December 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

1. Claims 1, 9, 17 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claims 1, 9, 17 and 24, line 2, it is unclear what "a low K dielectric layer" encompasses. If the applicant intended a particular range of dielectric constant it must be clearly recited.

2. Claims 4, 6, 7, 15, 16, 22, 23, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claims 4, 6, 7, 15, 16, 22, 23, and 24, the basic of the combination ratio must be recited, e.g. atomic...

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 2823

Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of Vyvoda et al. (U.S. Pub. 2002/0105057) and Yoon (U.S. Pub. 2002/0090784).

AAPA teaches plasma etching a feature 17 into a low K dielectric layer 16 having a photoresist mask 18, the plasma generating etch residues 22 in and around the feature (page 1, line 20 to page 2, line 17 and FIG. 1A); and

Ashing the semiconductor wafer to remove the photoresist mask, the ashing generating ashing residues 27 (page 2, line 18 to page 3, line 4 and FIG. 1B);

AAPA discloses (page 3, lines 5-12) removing the etching residues and the ashing residues from the low K dielectric layer by moving the wafer into the chemical bath containing liquids but fails to teach removing being enhanced by scrubbing the low K dielectric layer of the semiconductor wafer with a wet brush that applied a fluid mixture including a cleaning chemistry and a wetting agent wherein the wetting agent is a surfactant and the cleaning chemistry includes a combination of NH_2OH , H_2O_2 , and deionized (DI) water as recited in present claims 1, 2, 9, 11, 17, 18 and 24.

Vyvoda teaches removing the residues (page 2, paragraph [0019]) from the low K dielectric layer (page 2, paragraph [0020]), the removing being enhanced by scrubbing the low K dielectric layer of the semiconductor wafer with a wet brush (page 2, paragraph [0021]) that applies a fluid mixture including a cleaning chemistry (standard clean SC1) solution including a combination of NH_2OH , H_2O_2 , and deionized (DI) water (page 1, paragraph [0004]). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of making semiconductor devices to incorporate Vyvoda's teaching into AAPA's method in

Art Unit: 2823

order to provide a wafer surface comprising semiconductor and dielectric that attracts enough water to allow the wafer surface to wet so that the residual slurry particles and metal contaminants may be removed therefrom (page 1; [paragraph 0009]).

Neither AAPA nor Vyvoda discloses wherein the surfactant is selected from a group comprising fluorosurfactants and hydrocarbon surfactants as recited present claims 3, 12, and 19.

However, the use of a surfactant selected from a group comprising fluorosurfactants and hydrocarbon surfactants is well-known to one of ordinary skill in the art of making semiconductor devices. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of making semiconductor devices to incorporate the known process into AAPA and Vyvoda's method to enable provision of the surfactant of AAPA and Vyvoda's.

Neither AAPA nor Vyvoda discloses the percent by weight range of the surfactant concentration as recited in present claims 4, 5, 13, 14, 20 and 21.

However, there is no evidence indicating that the percent by weight range of the surfactant concentration is critical and it has been held that it is not inventive to discover the optimum or workable ranges of a result-effective variable within given prior art conditions by routine experimentation. See MPEP 2144.05.

Neither AAPA nor Vyvoda disclose the range of the combination ratio of NH_2OH , H_2O_2 , and deionized (DI) water as recited in present claims 6, 7, 15, 16, 22, 23 and 24.

Art Unit: 2823

Yoon disclose (page 4, paragraph [0048]) wherein the combination ratio of NH_2OH , H_2O_2 , and deionized (DI) water is about 1:4:20. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of making semiconductor devices to incorporate Yoon's teaching into AAPA's and Vyvoda's method in order to completely remove the damaged layer and the plate-shaped defect (page 4, paragraph [0048]).


Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Khiem D Nguyen whose telephone number is (703) 306-0210. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Chaudhuri Olik can be reached on (703) 306-2794. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 746-9179 for regular communications and (703) 746-9179 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

K.N.
January 13, 2003


George Fourson
Primary Examiner
2823